

FOUR MONTHS IN LIBERIA:

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OR

African Colonization Exposed,

BY WILLIAM NESBIT,
OF HOLLIDAYSBURG.

PITTSBURGH,
PRINTED BY J. T. SHRYOCK, No. 84 FIFTH STREET.
1855.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855,
BY WILLIAM NESBIT,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for
the Western District of Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER I.

False Representations of Colonization Agents. Reasons which induced me to Emigrate. Arrival There. Kindly Received. Realized the Deception.

Being a colored man, and having keenly felt the persecutions and annoyances to which my race is subject in this country, the result of the base pandering of the dough-faces to the inhuman spirit of Slavery, which has bred up the American Colonization Society, which, on all occasions, becoming and unbecoming, seeks to impress us with the doctrine that, although natives of the soil, this is not our home; that our presence here is not agreeable to the whites, nor is our condition advantageous to ourselves; that we are morally, mentally and physically, inferior; an idle, worthless, vicious population; nuisances, &c.; that there is no part of the American Continent on which we can live, and thrive, and grow; that the genius of progress has reserved the Western Hemisphere exclusively for the possession and development of the Anglo-Saxon race; that all our efforts

to better our condition must prove abortive, so long as we remain occupants of the same soil, a distinct and antagonistic race. Learned divines, statesmen and logicians, assert this. They say that the God of nature designed that it should be so; that the spirit of the age and the history of American Institutions, prove that the two races cannot exist on equal terms here. And through their wiles they have succeeded in verifying these dogmas. For a colored man, let him possess ever so large a share of intelligence, refinement, wealth or enterprise—though by every principle of right and justice entitled to all the privileges and immunities of every other citizen—is basely discarded by the land of his birth, and told that if he wishes to enjoy his God-given rights, to escape the vortex they have opened for him, he must emigrate to Liberia, in Africa, which they represent as a flourishing republic, possessing the elements of greatness and usefulness; in short, being the only panacea for our wounds. This institution is a scheme of the most consummate villainy ever enacted, and though supported and applauded by some of the greatest and best of the land, by different men, from different motives, has enlisted in its cause as agents,

some of the most unscrupulous men, white and colored, to be found anywhere; men who for the love of gold, create and circulate the most egregious falsehoods for the purpose of fleecing the public out of their money, and living on and victimizing the unsuspecting colored man. From reading and hearing on this subject, I became fired with anxiety, and determined to test its realities; but after a brief residence there, having ocular demonstration of the iniquitous swindle, I left that, in disgust, thinking myself amongst the happiest of men to escape that infernal snare, and believing it to be my duty to spread these facts before the people, that they may read, reflect and understand.

Our expedition, which consisted of fifty-three persons, all from the Northern States, and principally from Pennsylvania, sailed from New York on the 10th of November, 1853, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society, on the barque *Isla de Cuba*, Capt. Austin Miller; and after a passage of thirty-eight days, having experienced probably every variety of weather incident to a voyage at sea, we anchored off Monrovia, the Capital of Liberia, on the 18th December. Having coasted

from northward of Sierra Leone, about three hundred miles, we were enabled to form a pretty correct idea of the coast, which is universally low, only interrupted by the high promontory of Cape Mount.

We were kindly received by the citizens of Monrovia; indeed I will do them the justice to say, that in their intercourse with strangers, they are kind and hospitable, and very anxious to encourage emigration. On stepping ashore, I found that we had been completely gulled and done for. The statements generally circulated in this country by the Colonization agents, respecting the thrift and prosperity of that country, are most egregious falsehoods. Everything is exaggerated. The whole country presents the most woe begone and hopeless aspect which it is possible for a man to conceive of, and having lived in this country and seen and enjoyed the blessings of civilization, he readily conceives that he has been taken out of himself, metamorphosed into something else, and cast away into a region of darkness and desolation, for which there is no hope.

CHAPTER II.

Describes all the Settlements in Montserrado County. No Manufactories. Trade. Titled Gentry. Slavery, &c. Treatment at Receptacle. M. E. Mission. Attempts at Farming. Cape Mount. Marshall. Population.

Monrovia, which is eligibly situated on high land on Cape Montserrado, contains about eighteen hundred of a population, colonist, and native, and presents an ancient and dilapidated appearance. The streets are broad and straight, but are so grown up with bramble bushes as to leave but a narrow path for the pedestrian. I know places in the streets of Monrovia, in which elephants might hide in perfect safety. The public buildings are three churches, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian, an academy, and a high school. A wooden building called the Government House, used as the head-quarters of the President, Secretaries and Post Master; also, as a printing office. A small stone building, on the first floor of which, the Courts are held, while the upper story is used as the Senate Chamber. Another small stone building in which the lower House of Representatives meets, and a rickety old jail. There are seven brick houses here, a

few comfortable frame houses, but by far the largest number are very indifferent dilapidated frame and bamboo huts, certainly not worth ten dollars a piece. On all these buildings the climate has such a blighting effect, that they wear a withering and ruinous appearance; indeed, the meanest village that I know in the United States, far transcends Monrovia in the beauty of its buildings, and the appearance of its thrift. As there are no horses, cattle, or beasts of burthen of any kind, all the labor has to be performed by the naked natives. The only attempt at manufacturing at all worthy of the name, is the boasted building concern of Mr. Warner—even that is on a very small scale. A great many are in the employ of the Missionary and Colonization Societies, but all, including the Missionaries themselves, are traders. Some few are wealthy and keep tolerable establishments; mostly, however, they are small affairs, low doggeries that deal out to the poor ignorant natives, rum, tobacco, cotton cloth, trinkets, &c., &c., at enormous prices—in exchange for which they get Palm Oil, Camwood, &c., trading off these articles again to merchant vessels that frequently visit the coast. Thus they get their living, entirely

neglecting agriculture and everything else that would tend to develop the resources of the country. Among all those miserably poor people, there is scarcely one too poor to have some kind of a handle affixed to his name.— They have all high sounding titles; nearly every man you meet is a General, Colonel, Major, Captain, Judge, and at the very least an esquire. They have only to make friends with the President, and ever afterwards are classed among the titled gentry, and, as may be imagined, they constitute a sort of cod-fish aristocracy, amusing to look at. Every colonist keeps native slaves, (or as they term them servants,) about him, varying in number from one to fifteen, according to the circumstances of the master. These poor souls they beat unmercifully, and more than half starve them, and all the labor that is done at all, is done by these poor wretches. They (the colonists) assume to be very pious, and indeed make a great deal of outward show of religion, but if half that is said of them be true, the best among them are but whited sepulchres, and there is certainly no people anywhere more fond of fine dress and vain show.

Eight miles above Monrovia, on the St.

Paul river, and near its junction with Stoc-ton creek, is the receptacle or long-house, used as the residence of new emigrants, during the first six months, which is supposed to be the most critical time in the acclimating. This is a long low brick building, divided off into little stalls or rooms, just large enough to admit a bed, table, and a few chairs. Into each of these stalls which open into a common hall passing through the centre, just like those in a large barn or stable, they usually huddle together a family, (if they happen to be poor, and without influence,) paying no regard to their comfort, delicacy or health, or to the number confined in each of them, and the stalls being badly ventilated, and the poor emigrants uncared for, of course a very large disproportionate number of these deluded victims of the cupidity of Colonization agents, after a brief incarceration in that miserable place, breathing that stifled air, fall unwept, unhonored and unsung, far away from the land of their birth, and from every pleasing recollection of life; their corpses hurried out of sight only to give place to others following in their wake. These things are known to the Colonization agents in this country, and they certainly deserve, as

they will ultimately receive, the execrations of all the friends of outraged humanity, for their base and criminal neglect in this particular. On the banks of this river, which are high from the receptacle up, are a number of small settlements, mostly called towns, and distinguished by very large high sounding names. It is a notorious fact that all these settlements, which generally consist of at most a half-dozen scattered bamboo huts, for the purpose of giving them importance, are known and designated by such names as are given the largest American cities. Of this class are Lower and Upper Caldwell, Baltimore, Virginia, Kentucky, Clay, Ashland, New York, Millsburg, &c., &c. I have visited all these settlements, and do unhesitatingly say, that I am not able to imagine any more abject state of misery than exists even here on the banks of the St. Paul, the garden spot of Liberia. This, like all the Liberian rivers, is navigable for canoes, only a few miles inland. Millsburg is the head of navigation, and the seat of the M. E. Missionary operations, than which, there exists no greater humbug. This New York settlement is the one, about which there has been so much noise made by Colonization agents and

newspapers, for some years back. It consists of one one-story frame house, fourteen by sixteen feet, which is everywhere known as the big-house, and four very small bamboo huts; and, indeed, this description is about applicable to all these settlements, pompous in their representations, insignificant in their reality. Two men on the banks of this river, have labored hard to clear the land, and make coffee and sugar farms. I allude to Mr. Blacklidge and Mr. Hooper; but they have been unsuccessful hitherto, and will ultimately be forced to renounce their task, owing to the impossibility of clearing the land of bush.

Cape Mount is a bold high promontory, forty miles northward of Monrovia, and presents a handsome prospect from the coast. There are no civilized settlements there, and it being the principal seat of those interminable native wars, offers but few inducements to settlers. Marshall, forty miles south-east of Monrovia, is a settlement of a few colonists who are fast retrograding, and assimilating themselves with the natives in their customs and habits. They are scarcely superior to them in anything now, and the same ratio of deterioration will, in a short time, render it impossible for the most

astute to discern between them. These are all the settlements or places of any interest in Messurado, or Montserrado County, and my estimate of its colonist population does not exceed two thousand eight hundred, allowing it the very most it is entitled to.

CHAPTER III.

Bassa County. Bombastic Municipal Government of Buchanan. Population.

Bassa county embraces four little settlements immediately on the beach, containing altogether, less than eight hundred of a population. The largest of them was formerly called Bassa, but is now known by the dignified title of the City of Buchanan, and is chiefly distinguished for the bushes growing in its streets, and the long list of offices in its municipal government. They have a Mayor, Select and Common Council, Policemen, Aldermen, Watchmen, and in fact, they have monopolized every name in the vocabulary of municipal, civil, and military

offices—hence, it is not uncommon for one man to have vested in him, in a small way, the honors and responsibilities of a number of those stations. Here reside some of those great men who write windy letters to the Colonization papers, about the progress they have made in agriculture, &c., at the very time that they are dependent on the uncultivated natives for the rice and cassada they eat.

From reading their bombastic reports, one would suppose that it was a place of some consequence, while it really is a starved-up little village, too poor to have even an apology for a court house or jail. Fishtown is the next in importance, and with Celina and Bexley, make up the entire settled portions of Bassa county, remarkable only for the bombast and ignorance of its inhabitants. Colonist population all told, will not foot up eight hundred.

CHAPTER IV.

Sinoe County—(not from personal observation.) Number of votes polled. Population. Total Population.

As I did not visit Sinoe county, I cannot speak from personal observation, but from

what I could gather from persons who had been there, and among others, Senator Morris and Mr. Mitchel, the representatives, it is of a piece with the other two counties. There is but one settlement, Greenville. The houses are nearly all built of bamboo and mud, and in the last Presidential election, an exciting campaign, they polled less than one hundred and eighty votes; and for the intelligence and thrift of its inhabitants, I judge by those representatives, who were below even the Liberian average. Population cannot exceed eight hundred.

These three Counties, and this meagre population of four thousand and four hundred, compose all that is of that mean farce known as the Republic of Liberia.

CHAPTER V.

Geographical Situation. Water, &c. Heat. Wet and dry Seasons. Tornadoes.

Liberia is situated between the fifth and seventh degrees of north latitude, and about the tenth meridian west longitude. The cli-

mate is extremely hot, the thermometer ranging at from ninety-four to ninety-eight in the shade. The seasons are divided into wet and dry—the wet commences in May and lasts till November, during which time it rains almost unceasingly, and in such torrents as we Northerners cannot imagine. During the dry season which lasts the balance of the year, it seldom rains at all. The sun being directly over their heads, pours down on them the rays of his heat without stint.

Tornadoes, or the most violent and appalling storms of wind, thunder and lightning, are of almost daily occurrence.

The water is miserable stuff, having a foul taste, fully luke-warm when it comes out of the well or spring. This article, which is so necessary to the comfort and health of a people, seems particularly disagreeable and ill-suited to us. It is however made a little more palatable by putting it in earthen jars, and setting it aside in the shade several hours to cool. Think you, who are quaffing the sparkling waters from these pure mountain streams, what those poor souls would give for one cooling draught.

CHAPTER VI.

Face of the Country. Swamp. All the high land named. Timber scarce. High land inaccessible.

The face of the country is one magnificent swamp, grown over with mangrove and dragon's blood bushes, interspersed here and there with a point of land sufficiently high on which to form a settlement. The Cape at Monrovia is one of these. Cape Mount is another, so is part of the banks of the St. Paul and Junk rivers, and except these, there is very little other land there free from the inundations of the tide which rises all over it twice a day, and at its ebb, leaves the most foul and sickening miasma conceivable. A great deal of the disease of the country is produced by the effluvia arising from these swamps. On every prominence of land sufficiently high, there is a native settlement, and meagre as is the number of civilized persons there, all things considered, there is not room for a great many more.

The land is very fertile, yet it does not produce any timber of consequence. It is true that camwood, rosewood, wismore, gum, and

some other varieties do grow there, but so sparsely that it would not average one tree on a mile.

There is observable however, from the coast, the Kong mountains, which indicate high land, and possibly a good country; but they are at present inaccessible to Liberia, because the navigation of the rivers is interrupted by the falls or rapids rendering it impossible to take a canoe into the upper country. It is impracticable to make roads there, because they have not the wherewithal necessary. If the roads were made they would have to be re-opened every month, owing to the dense and rapid growth of the brush—and that upper country does not belong to Liberia.

CHAPTER VII.

Agriculture. No farming at all. Dense and rapid growth of the Bush. Rice and Cassada the only staples. Colonists dependent on the Natives for Food. Fruits, &c.

It is amusing to one who knows, to read the windy letters from some of the Liberians, respecting the Agricultural resources and progress of that country. There positively is not,

nor never has been a plow, a horse, or a yoke of oxen, used in all the country. No man there has now or ever had, five acres of land cleared and in cultivation, and I am one of those who believe that it is impossible to clear the land, owing to the dense and rapid growth of the bush. The nearest description that I can give of this bush is to call it a bramble, but as there is nothing grows in this country like it, I cannot convey to the reader a very clear idea of it. Suffice it to say, that nothing can exceed the density and rapidity of its growth. Every thing grows thorny and crooked, and the natives, when they want to plant their rice, find it easier to clear a new piece than to plant the same place over again two years in succession. Rice and cassada is their only staples. The latter is a coarse, tough, clammy, tasteless root, which nothing but dire necessity would induce a man to eat. Sweet potatoes do grow there, but to a very small extent, and these miserable creatures, (the colonists) are actually dependent on the naked natives for their rice and cassada.

Of fruits, they have the plantain, banana, orange, lemon, pine-apple, sour-sop, sweet-sop, tamarind, cocoa nut, &c. Coffee and sugar

would grow very abundantly, but for some reason the amount produced has been very small, totally inadequate to the demands of that small colony.

CHAPTER VIII.

Causes which bring Disease. Cannot escape the Fever. Frightful Mortality. Diseases following in its train. Craw-Craw. Jiggers. Sleeping Disease. Old Sores, &c.

The unhealthfulness of that climate is proverbial, superinduced by the low, swampy situation of the country; the extreme constant heat of the sun, and the continual decay of vegetable matter. The diseases which might naturally be expected to arise from exposure to these influences, present themselves to all new comers to an alarming extent. Every colonist *must* get the fever. And do not, reader, for one moment harbor the fancy that you could escape it, or that it is light or trivial.—It is a dread, stern reality, and although not generally so suddenly fatal as is the cholera,

yellow fever, plague, &c., it is no less sure in its effects, varied however, very considerably in its phenomena, by the period of residence and circumstances of the patient. Hence, the mortality to poor emigrants is so very large, proved from the fact that of over twenty-seven thousand sent there since 1820, there are less than five thousand there now, while if it were a healthy country, the emigrants and their natural increase, would now number more than forty thousand. The period of acclimation varies in different persons from two to five years. While passing through the fever, a man becomes a frightful maniac, and realizes perhaps, the most horrid suffering which it is possible for human nature to endure. And even if he recovers from the fever, he must invariably pass through a series of other diseases; some, the most loathsome imaginable—for instance, the *craw-craw*; the flesh becomes a mass of corruption. I have seen people afflicted with it who were walking carrions. The jiggers is another of those diseases produced by an insect which deposits its eggs in the flesh, which incubates and forms ulcers, from which live things crawl, and the mildest of the fevers follows. The sleeping disease pro-

duces a lethargy from which no efforts will rouse the patient, and after months of passive, dreamy unconsciousness, he sleeps himself away, never more to feel the pains of earth. Such is the climate, that if a *colonist* gets a flesh-wound, a mere scratch, it never heals.—There are scores of people now in Liberia, afflicted with sores horrid to look at—some of very long standing, which, if they were in this climate, nature herself would heal. Reader, I am not dealing in fiction, but relating to you things as they occurred to me there, and which you will find to your cost, if ever you are foolish enough to be persuaded by Colonization agents, to go there. And in this connection, I will say that the mortality among the males is greater than among females, the census showing that in point of numbers the women stand as two and a half to one man. This is sufficiently accounted for by the fact, that the men must expose themselves to the weather more than the women, and exposure there inevitably brings death.

CHAPTER IX.

Government. Republic a burlesque. Bargain with the Colonization Society. Persons cannot leave without a Passport. Public notice. Copy of Passport. Imprisonment of Debtors. Armstrong Sold. Whipping Post, &c. &c.

Republic, as it is called, its laws are a burlesque on a free country. The Government is in league with the Colonization Society. It is the part of the Society to send emigrants there, and the part of the Government to keep them there when sent; and arbitrary and unchristian as is that compact, its provisions are rigidly and unswervingly enforced. One of their statute laws forbids all captains, owners, and agents of vessels, from taking away any individual out of that Republic, under a penalty of five hundred dollars, without a passport obtained from the Secretary of State. And if a man wish to leave that country, he must first give a ten days' public notice of that intention, and if, at the end of that time, no one objects to his going, he must then make application to the Secretary of State. That functionary, in obedience to his instructions, is not very willing to grant them; and never,

unless he has sufficient reason to believe that the applicant designs coming back. If he can make sufficient influence, and friends to back up his petition, and remove the doubts of that worthy dignitary, he can procure one as I did.

Knowing the obstacles that stand in the way of procuring passports, I had steadily pursued a course of deception, by giving out the impression that I only wanted to return for my family, and would, during my visit to the United States, exert myself to induce as many as possible to emigrate with me; and having really created the impression, I asked Gen. John N. Lewis, (who, at the same time, fills the offices of Commander-in-Chief of all his Excellency's military forces, Secretary of State, Baptist Missionary, and Commission Merchant,) if it was absolutely necessary that I should put up a public notice, &c. He said it was; that for himself, he felt willing, in my case, to dispense with it, but the President was inexorable on that subject, and had ordered him to be very particular as to whom he granted passports, as they had been several times deceived. I accordingly gave the required notice, and at the end of ten days, on the payment of fifty cents, I received my pass-

port, a month before an opportunity offered to leave; and the reader may rest assured, that during the balance of my stay there, I conducted myself with precision, and concealed my opinions carefully, lest something should eke out adverse to the President's liking, and prevent my escape.

Here is a copy of that important document; the body of the original is in the hand-writing of the President, and signed by Gen. Lewis, as Secretary of State, by which the reader will perceive that I was granted permission to visit the United States.

“ DEPARTMENT OF STATE, }
 “ *Monrovia, March 12th, 1854.* }

“The bearer hereof, William Nesbit, a citizen of Liberia, having applied for a Passport to visit the United States of North America: and having complied with the law regulating Passports, is hereby permitted to do so, without hindrance or molestation.

“ Given under my hand and the seal of the Republic, this twelfth day of
 [SEAL.] March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, and of the Republic the seventh.”

“ J. N. LEWIS,
 “ *Secretary of State.*”

But I venture to say, that not one in a hundred that used every exertion in their power to get away, were successful. Numerous instances were related to me, of persons who, if they could have succeeded in making good their exit from that prison-house, would long ago have spread these facts before the world; but lacking prudence to conceal their real opinion of things around them, were coldly denied the liberty of going when and where they pleased; and are now, by virtue of that unholy compact, and the tyranny of those rulers, doomed to pass the remainder of their miserable existence there, completely fastened in the talons of their destroyers.

They have also laws allowing imprisonment for debt, and the public sale of a debtor to the highest bidder, to work out the amount of his indebtedness. I saw an example of that law, myself. A colonist named Armstrong, who is himself a slave-holder, was sold for debt at Monrovia, and was, at the time I left that place, working out the term of his servitude. And there is nothing more common than to punish offenders at the public whipping-post, and in that way wipe out their crimes; in fact that is the only mode of punishment at all

practicable, as there is but one jail in the country, (that at Monrovia.) And numerous other similar specimens of the wisdom of their rulers, and the freedom and magnanimity of their government, are daily exhibited, constituting it as very a tyranny as ever disgraced the earth. Of course, the manner of conducting the government is of an exact piece with all their other impudent pretensions. They assume to be republic, to have copied their forms and laws from the United States. And to give color to it, they pretend to have vested their power and authority in executive, legislative, judicial, and all the other departments, cabinets, and bureaus known in the government of nations; and, however strange it may seem to the reader, it is not the less true, that all this famous government, and all this long list of officers, is in the hands of one man, and that man but a tool in the hands of the Colonization Society. It is true that the President, Vice President, six Senators, and nine representatives, are elected by the people. But a little money and patronage do a great deal with such people; and does any sane man think that the Colonization Society, through its active agent, *President Roberts*, does not use

these, in order to have the government harmonize with their *wishes*? If any man would read the long list of officers belonging to the Liberian Government, he would read the name of nearly every man there, and yet all these officers are at the beck and call of President Roberts. He is the main-spring of all this machinery, and on him, through the support and connivance of the Colonization Society, devolves the carrying on and glossing over of as villainous an outrage as ever was perpetrated on a credulous people.* And I do not deny the consummate skill and ability of that potentate. This is most emphatically the one man power. Beside those officers I have mentioned, the people do not even go through the form of electing any others. All the Judges, Sheriffs, Justices, Constables, and every other officer, are appointed by the President. And it is humiliating to me to say it, though it must be said, that the majority of them, even including some of his cabinet officers, *cannot read*, and are totally ignorant of the simplest duties belonging to their stations. Every thing is and must be done by the President. He performs the duties of judge, counsellor,

* The tenure of the land is held in the Colonization Society, and the deeds are made through the President, as its agent.

justice, and constable. He receives, disburses, and keeps the accounts; in short, he is the government, the embodiment of Liberia; and when you speak of Liberia, you speak of President Roberts. For the reasons herein given, I predict the speedy downfall of this humbug; but as long as it does exist, although he may not always nominally appear as President, still, possessing superior skill and less soul than any other man there, he will continue to be, behind the screen, the pliant tool in the hands of his master, (Rev. J. B. Pinney,) as long as the American public choose to shut their eyes, and contribute their money, to the maintenance of this iniquity.

CHAPTER X.

Wild Animals and obnoxious and poisonous Reptiles are numerous. Driver, Bug-a-Bug, &c.

There is, perhaps, no country in the world, more prolific than this, in the number and variety of its wild beasts of prey, obnoxious and poisonous reptiles, and destroying insects. Nature seems to have placed there the most

loathsome of her productions. The animal kingdom combines with the elements to render it the most detestable spot on earth. Elephants, leopards and tiger-cats are numerous, often coming into the settlements. Of amphibious animals, they have the hippopotamus and crocodile; and there seems to be no end to the number and variety of the monkey species which fill every tree. Of reptiles and insects, they have the mammoth boa-constrictor, thirty feet in length; the cobra de cabello, the most venomous of all snakes; and every species that has any affinity to that family, finds there its legitimate home. Lizards and centipedes, a foot in length, and the tarantula or hairy spider, very poisonous, are numerous. The driver is of the black-ant species, not larger than the ordinary ant, but differing entirely in their habits; they eat nothing but flesh, and when they go forth in search of food, they attack indiscriminately every living thing that is in their way; man, beast and reptile, must give way before them. They are in such immense droves, that when they surround an object, it matters little whether it be a man, an elephant, or a boa-constrictor; escape from them is impossible, and they

never leave it while a morsel of flesh remains on its bones. The bug-a-bug, or termite, a white ant, eats up all their houses, furniture, fences, and every thing that is manufactured of wood. They are in such innumerable quantities, that a very considerable portion of the country is taken up with their habitations, which are of clay, and twenty feet or more in height. Besides these, there are an infinite variety of others, so numerous that you cannot look any where without seeing them; they are in your food, in the water you drink, and imagination cannot exaggerate them in their numbers, or in the horror they inspire.

CHAPTER XI.

Slavery. Slavery exists. Its severity. Badly fed. Separate huts for the Slaves. Bought from Parents. Sometimes run away. Second President. Manner of civilizing the Natives.

That slavery exists in Liberia, is too true. I would, for the sake of humanity, and the honor of the Colonization Society, that it

were otherwise. But slavery as abject, and far more merciless than is to be found almost any where else, exists there universally. There is not one who does not own more or less slaves. They are mostly manumitted slaves themselves, and have felt the blighting effects of slavery here, only to go there to become masters. After my limited powers of description are exhausted, imagination can perhaps finish the picture of the condition of the *Slave's Slave*. A parallel to the Liberian system of slavery is scarcely to be found on the American continent; certainly no where else but on the least favored plantations. Slavery here is severe servitude, generally with plenty to eat; but in Liberia, they have the same tasks to perform, the same stripes to endure, severer masters to please, without sufficient clothing to deserve the name, nor enough rice and cassado, which are the slaves' only food, to satisfy their appetites. They need not, like Oliver Twist, ask for more; their only chance for a full meal, is to steal it; and in that country, theft would be a poor dependence; and as to meat, the slave must content himself if he can catch a monkey, a snake, a crocodile, lizard, rat, or something of this kind, which

they often do, and devour it with a gusto, that would astonish and disgust the poorest-fed slaves in the United States. As in the slave states of this country, the slaves occupy small buildings near to their masters' residence, known as the "negro quarters," so their imitators in Liberia, notwithstanding the masters mostly live in bamboo huts themselves, many of them not sufficient to protect the pious patriarchs from the weather, let the colonist himself be barefoot, and three parts naked, let him feel the gnawings of want ever so keenly, still he is never too poor to own slaves, and to have a hut for them at a short distance from his own; and so exact have they been in carrying out the customs and feelings of their exemplars in this country, that the slave is never allowed to eat or sleep in the master's house, or hut, as the case may be. These slaves are generally obtained by purchase from the native parents, after arriving at such size and age as to be able to labor, at prices varying from eight to fifteen dollars. After the private transaction between the master and parents, the courts, at the instance of the master, go through some mummary which fastens the fetters upon the

purchased child during his natural life. But I am glad to say that there are many, the laws of Liberia to the contrary, notwithstanding, who run away to the bush; once there, and he is safe. Like the slaves in this country, they run away, re-associate with their brother natives, and defy the powers that would enslave them. Still, there is no lack of slaves; the low price at which they can be bought, makes it a matter of economy to the master, when one of his slaves run away, to buy another, rather than attempt to reclaim the runaway. There is, however, one means much resorted to, to prevent slaves from running away, and its potency is astonishing. I allude to a slave owned by James M'Gill, familiarly called the "second President;" who, though a slave himself, exerts a powerful influence over his native brethren. When a master wishes to obtain the help of this individual, to enable him to retain his slaves, he makes the "second president" a dosh, (gift,) and informs him what he wants him to do. This potent dignitary forthwith gives the slaves a harrangue in their native language, addressing both their hopes and their fears; and being superstitious, this appliance gener-

ally accomplishes the object of its design. How long it will require the Liberian colonists to civilize and christianize the idolatrous natives, is yet an unsettled question. It is, however, certain, that if the cruelist slavery on which the sun ever shone—if wars brought on to raise the price of fire-arms and amunitions—if drunkenness causes them to increase the sale and the price of rum—if all the vices of civilization, without any of its virtues, in any one of these, or all of them combined, can christianize Africa, then the work is in good hands, and I have no doubt will be carried forward; slowly, perhaps, but sure, as that Liberia continues to be a decoy for the colored people of this country.

The colonist once entrapped into this hell on earth, finds, to his dismay, that he cannot return at will, and it is natural that he should try to make the best of a bad bargain; so the manumitted slave, who always thought his master supremely happy, undertakes to procure happiness for himself, by the same means. With a few trinkets, rum, tobacco, &c. he buys a slave, and sets up tyrant on his own hook. They profess to have broken up the foreign slave trade, which is far from the truth;

but suppose they had done so, is that *even* a blessing, under the circumstances? I would a 'thousand times rather be a slave in the United States than in Liberia.

CHAPTER XII.

Missionaries.

We are used to reading very encouraging accounts of Missionary exertions and successes among the natives of Liberia, and any one not conversant with the real workings of the system, would be led to believe that the Missionaries there had been in the hands of God, very widely instrumental in spreading his gospel, and its blessings, among those idolatrous tribes, and that the effects of their labors would be readily observable to the beholder, in their renouncing their pagan rites and customs, and preferring and practicing, at least, some of the habits of civilization. But what are the facts as presented to one, resident among them.—

There are hordes of Missionaries there, some of them of very fair attainments, supported and pampered by benevolent donations of means, by the American public. Indeed, there cannot be less than two hundred persons there, receiving salaries as Missionaries, whose only object seems to be, to gull and mislead their patrons, respecting the progress of their work, and to their sins of omission and commission, are to be charged the whole wrong of bolstering up Liberia. If the Missionaries would only tell the truth, and not for the sake of individual gains, deceive the public, one fair, unvarnished statement, from them, would so thoroughly disgust the people of the United States, that the Missionary, as well as the Colonization Societies, would die for want of sustenance, in one short month. They have really done nothing in the way of civilizing and christianizing Africa. I know that this subject is too grave to trifle about; and I speak advisedly, when I say, that there are not twenty civilized and converted natives in all the colony. Not one native, even in Monrovia, out of every hundred, ever goes to church, or attends on any other duties, in the least degree indicating a desire for, or knowledge of

civilization, or christianity. They (the Missionaries,) have, to a man, turned traders; some even are engaged in dealing out rum and fire-arms. All their pretended religious demonstrations are confined among the colonists, and I verily believe, that the Missionary and Colonization enterprise, conducted as they have been, are an injury to that country; and they, from their wanton perversion of the advantages of knowledge, have contaminated the natives, and sunk them still lower. There are, however, some two or three who have been more honest in their habits—Mrs. Wilkins, of White-Plains Mission, a manual-labor school, devoted exclusively to the education of female natives—this old lady has labored assiduously for twenty-three years, with a zeal worthy of the cause, and such is their tenacity to their ancient customs and traditions, that there is not *one* of all the number that she has brought up, and educated, and taught the right way, but who have gone back to the bush, and divested themselves of their clothing, and every other remembrance of civilization, and are now practicing every abomination belonging to heathenism. The old lady, having fruitlessly toiled amongst them, the best years of her

life, was forced to relinquish her task, in disgust, and returned home to the States a year ago. Any other Missionaries there, who are doing any good at all, have their labors directed exclusively amongst the colonists, not deigning to hold religious converse with the natives. I will offer the following incidents, to show the manner in which these Missionaries deal with the natives. Palm Oil, being one of the chief commodities of the country, and being very bulky, dirty, and difficult to handle, I, as a trader, was at a loss to make out what great profit there was in dealing in it, seeing that the price at which it was bought and sold, was 33 cents per gallon, and had steadily refused to purchase any, until I was initiated into the secrets of the loss and gain of the trade, by Rev. Mr. Hill, a Missionary of the Baptist church, at Marshall, receiving a salary as such, from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, in this county. "These people" (the natives,) said Mr. Hill, "have no ideas of weight and measure, and when we buy from them, we use a gallon measure that holds a gallon and a half, and in this way, pay ourselves for our trouble; and in weighing camwood, we always take enough to make it cheap."

The Rev. Mr. Burns, the resident Bishop, or Superintendant of the M. E. Church, on seeing some of us feeding our natives with meat, remonstrating with us, said they were not used to that kind of treatment, and it would spoil them; and I might cite numerous similar instances, did I deem it necessary.



CHAPTER XIII.

Poor Emigrants. Their Condition. Prospects. Ultimate Fate. Discontent. Conversation with Tucker.

The chances for the poor emigrant to Liberia, are exceedingly slim—he cannot escape the fever—that, is a fixed fact, and it is equally true, that there is no disease to which human flesh is heir, more terrible in its effects. But, suppose he is fortunate, and lives through it—what are his prospects then. At the end of six months he finds himself turned off by the Colonization Society, thrown on his own re-

sources, in a country that can afford him no possible employment, but paddling a canoe at twenty-five cents a day; and it would be at the imminent risk of his life, that he would expose himself to the scorching rays of the sun, and, in the nature of things, he could not have cleared and cultivated any land. He sees that nineteen twentieths of his neighbors are living in the most abject state of misery and want; that he is living in a mean, pusillanimous government, having for its only object, the decoy of the unsuspecting—that he is surrounded by, and must daily mingle with hordes of naked natives, whose habits his children will be sure to imbibe, rendering it certain, that however successful he may be, his children will deteriorate, and finally relapse back to heathenism. Having living witnesses constantly before him of the blighting effects of the climate and food, on the mental, physical, and moral powers, and knowing what he has lost by going there, he becomes dejected and desponding, and realizes that he has cast his lot in a hell on earth. He has no other alternative, but to turn in with those who have preceded him, and by hook and by crook, raise a little rum, tobacco, and cotton cloth, brass

trinkets, &c., and start on what is called bush trading. Necessity compels him to leave his conscience behind him, and he soon finds himself stooping to means that he would have scorned before. Many of these poor souls told me with tears in their eyes, that they would gladly return to the worst form of slavery in the United States, rather than remain in that place of torment. A large number of the colonist women have even been reduced to the extremity of marrying, or taking up with naked native men, and are living with them in shameless co-habitation; and to estimate this degradation properly, it is necessary to know, that nothing can exceed the supreme contempt with which the colonists always regard the natives.

Perhaps I cannot better illustrate to the reader, the real condition, mentally and physically, of this class of emigrants, after a few years residence there, than by relating a conversation with Mr. Tucker, of Marshall, who is about a fair sample of old Liberians. He was one of the few who had passed through the ordeal of their horrid diseases, got used to eating cassada, and was, according to the Colonization rule, elevated. He had grown prema-

turely old and decrepid, and, as will be seen, his mental faculties were not much improved. Being anxious to learn as much of men and things in that country, as possible, one day I asked him: Mr. Tucker, have you been in this country long?

T. Yes, sir, a long time.

N. How many years?

T. About ten or fifteen years.

N. Can't you tell more closely than that, which it is, ten or fifteen?

T. No sir, indeed I can't tell how long I have been here; I was young when I came; I am old now, and you will not find many Liberians who can tell how old they are, or how long they have been here.

After listening to him relate some national affair, in which he had taken part, I questioned him as to what time it occurred. He seemed surprised, that we, who lately came from the States, should be so particular about dates, &c. and with a good deal of feeling, remarked:—"My dear friend, when you have been in this country long enough to have eaten all the bread and meat you brought with you, when anything occurs, you will not be able to remember whether it was last week, last month or last year."

CHAPTER XIV.

Military and Naval Forces. Parades, Dress and Cannon. Schooner Lark. Naval Officers. Prison Ship Agility, &c.

The bombastic reports of President Roberts, and others, respecting their military, their army, their navy, &c. are supremely ridiculous. No where else, is so complete a farce exhibited, as at a military parade in Liberia. I witnessed one of these exhibitions in Monrovia, on the occasion of the inauguration of the President, and again at Marshall, on the regular muster day, prescribed by law; and certainly, there never was exhibited in the most ridiculous back-woods militia training, taking into the account, corn-stalks, tin pans, mushroom patriotism, and all, anything at all approximating in fantastical bombast, a parade in Liberia. I would that I were gifted with sufficient descriptive powers, to picture such a scene properly, to the reader, but am satisfied, that nothing but actual observation will enable any one to realize it. A heterogeneous company, of every hue and color, size and shape, two-thirds of them without either shoes or hat, quite a number without even an

apology for a shirt, or anything else to hide their nakedness, but a tattered pair of pants, while here and there stands a fellow decked out in all the paraphernalia of a cast-off British uniform, armed, cap-a-pie with a bamboo stick, and knowing nothing, whatever, of military evolutions, except what they have chanced to pick up, on witnessing a parade here. These are the flower of the Liberian army—the immediate satellites around his Excellency, President Roberts—and I am only induced to hold them up to ridicule, because I wish to give a correct picture of things as they exist there. They have a number of cannon, some of them quite formidable weapons, lying about the streets of the different settlements. Only two in the whole country are mounted; the rest are all lying about uncovered, and without care, forming an excellent harbor for snakes, &c. Indeed, so weak and defenceless is this mean humbug, that were the American and British Governments to withdraw their squadron from the coast, (the natives, who always regard the colonists as intruders,) would come on them, and by the preponderance of their numbers, wipe out this little plague-spot, by driving them into the sea.

The naval fleet of Liberia, has only one small vessel, the schooner Lark, six guns, presented to them by the British Government.— They, have, however, a numerous array of naval officers; Commodores, Captains, Lieutenants, Boatswains, Midshipmen, &c., which probably make up for the deficiency of vessels. I have never been able to learn that they did any effective service, other than to furnish a prison ship for the punishment of criminals. They do boast that she is a fast sailer, that no slaver visiting that coast can catch her, and relate numerous instances in which she gave the slavers leg-bail, proving beyond cavil, her superior agility, when pursued. As there is no one there who understands navigation, she never ventures out of sight of land, but sails up and down the coast once in a while, with what object, does not appear very clearly.

CHAPTER XV.

Probable Fate of Liberia. American and English Squadrons support it. Obstacles in its way. Senator Russels's opinion, &c.

Liberia cannot succeed! It is now only a fraud; and as soon as the American and English people withdraw their support, it will irresistibly fall back to its native heathenism. If the mortality there is so great, what is to keep it up when emigration shall cease? If the tendency of the colonists is to retrograde, what will preserve its pretensions to civilization? So weak are they, that I have often heard them admit, that if the American and English squadrons were withdrawn, which alone hold the natives in check, they could not preserve their nationality for one week. The natives would come upon them, and sweep them as with an avalanch into the ocean. The Colonization and Missionary Societies have, perhaps, done all that could be done. They have spent a vast amount of valuable lives and treasure, and have used every artifice to bolster it up. Still it does not advance; and, conceived as it was in sin, and

having no great work to do, no high destiny to fulfil, it must irresistibly fall. The enterprising Yankee, in the fullness of his pride, may point to the present and prospective greatness of this country, and claim that they have overcome more and greater difficulties than stand in the way of emigration to Liberia, but the facts will not justify that. When the Pilgrim Fathers sought these shores, they found a congenial clime, bountiful by nature, and they had only to make peace with their neighbors, and enjoy its full fruition. But it is not so with us; the climate is inhospitable; the air is filled with pestilence; the soil will not produce such food as we can live on; the impossibility of having beasts of burden. These and numberless other insurmountable obstacles, entirely preclude its progress. It does not possess any of the elements of greatness, and therefore cannot advance. And, indeed, I am not aware that there is any country on the globe, in the same latitude, and exposed to the same influences, against which these objections would not apply with full force; and the people of Liberia are not ignorant of the wrong done them in sending them there. They feel it as worse than slavery it-

self; and I have no hesitation in saying, that aside from those that are receiving legal salaries from the Missionary and Colonization Societies, there is not one man who does not indulge in execrations, loud and deep, against this institution, that has thus forced them from the land of their birth, a congenial climate, food adapted to them, and placed them in that far-off land of wretchedness and desolation, cut off from them the possibility to return, and abandon them to despair and woe; all, too, under color of philanthropy. And there are not wanting, even those who are feeding at the crib, honest enough to verbally speak the truth. Senator Russell, who is also an Episcopal clergyman, who has received largely of Pinney's bounties, made use of the following singular expression: "All colonizationists will go to *hell*; but Governor Pinney is the best white man alive!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Manners, Customs, &c. of the Natives.

The natives of that country, in point of numbers, as compared with the colonists, stand as thirty to one, are well formed, of black color, medium size, and tolerably regular features, very lazy, rude, and ignorant, filthy and disgusting in their habits; have their own laws and kings, totally disregarding the pusillanimous pretensions of the Colonial Government, which they consider a usurpation which they will rid themselves of some day. The mass of them do not wear any clothes at all, but appear in all the pride and beauty of nature, unadorned. The most of those living immediately in the settlements, wear a small breech-cloth, made out of one yard of calico; but it is very common to see men, and women even, in the best colonial settlements, as naked as when they came into the world. If they have any ideas of religion at all, it is of the darkest and most irredeemable paganism; full of idolatry and superstition, they attribute all their mishaps to the influence of evil spirits, witches, &c.

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Every native wears his *gree-gree*, which is a piece of writing, generally in Arabic, in a bag made of leather, ornamented with crocodile skin, &c. around his neck; they regard its power as potent in counteracting these evil spirits, witches, fetisch, &c. and such is their superstition, and so tenaciously do they hold to their notions, that they would just as soon part with life itself as with their gree-grees. These are furnished them by their gree-gree men or priests, who are generally of their own nation. Sometimes, however, they are renegade colonists, and perform some tricks in jugglery to show and maintain their power. They are poligamists to the greatest extent, and have as many wives as they are able to buy; and as all their wealth is invested in women, of course he that has the most wives, is the greatest man. Some have two or three, some a dozen; King Bamboo has sixty; others more than a hundred. One colonist named Early, went there as a missionary, abandoned his legitimate wife, bought ten native wives, seven of whom had children by him, set up a town for himself, and became a great man among them; and numerous other similar cases exist there at this time. These women they

buy, while young, of their parents, at prices ranging at from ten to fifteen dollars. They are slaves, absolutely the property of the husband or master, and they sell them or hire them out, not having the most remote idea of chastity. I know of one king on Junk river, that gave one of his wives to his own son, and she bore children to both of them. The women perform all the labor; the men only cut the bush, the women burn it, hoe the ground, plant the rice, and harvest it. Hence, the man that has a great number of wives, becomes a very important personage. They always live in little towns or villages, in huts built of bamboo, sometimes covered with mud, and some of them showing some taste in their construction. If a man has a great number of wives, he builds a town of his own, and sets up for himself; paying tribute, however, to a king of that tribe, who reigns over a large territory. In the center of the town is a large building, used as a kitchen for the whole community. Here they cook their chop, and then gather in groups, each family around their own cooking utensils; and with a large wooden spoon, or with their fingers, devour it. A favorite dish among them is dumboy; this is

made by pounding the cassada to a consistence like dough, making soup, generally out of snake, monkey, crocodile, or whatever is handiest, to give it a flavor; they then break it off in chunks, and swallow it, it being too tough to chew. When their children are one week old, they cram them as full of rice as they will hold, and lay them in the sun several hours, and if they live through that, they are worth raising; if they die, there are no regrets. They have few diseases among them, and the most common remedy is to grease themselves with palm-oil and lay in the sun.

The natives do not regard death as a natural consequence, the common lot of all; but when one of their number dies, they think that some one else has made a witch or fetish of him; and summoning a council, they accuse all who were supposed to be at enmity with him, and any who cannot establish their innocence, must pass through the ordeal of drinking sassy-wood. This is a fatal poison, and is the arbiter of nearly all their crimes; if he can eject it from his stomach, he lives, and is innocent; if it remains on his stomach, he dies, and is declared guilty. Twice a year they hold their great councils, or palavers, in

the gree-gree bush; here they pass their laws, settle their disputes, &c. One of their greatest events is initiating their young men, and making them palaver men, which always ends with feasting and rejoicing. Women are never, on any consideration, allowed to enter the gree-gree bush.

Their females are taken, when quite young, to the devil bush, a kind of nunnery, and placed in charge of an old woman, or matron, whose duty it is to bring them up according to their ancient customs and traditions. They remain here till they have acquired their education, and are sold. When one of their great men dies, they bury him in some conspicuous part of the town, in great splendor; having hired mourners, they get up the most hideous yells and lamentations; but when a commoner dies, they take him to some swamp or island, and turning an old canoe over him, leave his carcass to be devoured by the wild beasts and reptiles.

Taken as a whole, I believe the native Africans are the happiest people in existence; verifying the adage that, "If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise!" They pass their whole time in frolic and revelry, singing and

dancing; their only wants are rum, pipe and tobacco, (and of these only enough for their immediate use,) and these supplied, seated in their canoe, on their native waters, they make the welkin ring again with their merriment. They have a rude drum and harp, and though I have slept in native towns, so constant is their amusements, that I cannot form a conjecture as to what part of the twenty-four hours they devote to sleeping. They are very hospitable to strangers, and their custom is to make a dosh (gift) to their visitors, and expect one in return; and though dishonest themselves, in dealing, they are worsted by the superior knavery of the colonists.

CHAPTER XVII.

Domestic Animals. Small size of Cattle. No Horses or other beasts of burden.

Of domestic animals, they have a few beeves of a very diminutive size, certainly not larger than our six weeks old calves, and of quaint appearance; and with such immense horns, as to make one think that the best part of the beef had grown to horns. There is no more exciting event takes place in Monrovia, than the butchering of a beef, which rarely happens, owing to their scarcity. The poor starved colonists become frantic, each one desirous to taste meat once more; and the supply not being the one-tenth part equal to the demand, they pull away at, and pell mell each other; the strongest, securing the prize. They have a few sheep, with hair instead of wool—goats as highly prized for their meat as the sheep. They have a few very diminutive hogs. There is not one horse now, in the Republic—there was one when I went there, of a nondescript species; a size larger than Gen. Tom Thumb's Shetland ponies, and having some affinity to the horse, mule, or jack-ass; and indeed it

was difficult, from looking at him, to tell which class he approximated most nearly; but alas! and unfortunately for his owner, and for Liberia, he died—leaving not one vestage of his kind behind him. It is impossible to introduce domestic animals there; all attempts to that end, so far, have proved failures, for the reason that every living creature taken there, must pass through the acclimating fever, which has always, thus far, proved fatal. They have some chickens, and a very few turkeys and geese.

CHAPTER XVIII.

[*The following Letters, will corroborate my statements, in many particulars.*]

MARSHALL, Nov. 26th, 1854.

Dear Sir:—I received your letter on the 29th inst., at 3 o'clock, and felt so glad, that I sat on the counter from that until day-light, and read it, and drank rum. Sir, you say in your letter, that I gave you too short a statement of things here; I had, and still have, a reason for concealing my opinions; I am in Liberia, and cannot leave without a passport, and that is difficult to procure, and no vessel would take me without one. There are no roads here to travel in, and it is five or six months, before I expect to get away; and if I write you anything disagreeable to the powers here, the news might get back in time to prevent me from getting away. But I will say this much, that it is *hell* by the mile. Mr. Nesbit *don't tell* any *lie* about this country; the sixteenth part has never yet been told—he did not stay long enough to detest it right: laboring hands work for twenty-five cents per day—I have at this time, twenty-three employed at that price.

There are no horses or mules here; I did see the frame of a horse that was brought from the interior, about the size of Judge Gwinn's dog. All the farming is done by the natives—the ploughing is done with a hoe, about two inches broad, and six long,—the houses are little huts, built in the woods, and the brush is cleared away about ten feet around. As for towns and cities, there are none here; the city of Monrovia is about half as large as Huntingdon; there are five good houses there, and that is giving it all that is due it. The price of wild land, is fifty cents per acre; if cleared, five dollars. There is no produce raised here, except rice and cassada, and a few sweet potatoes; flour, is out of the question, and there is no meat, other than is wild in the bush. A few weeks ago, a vessel that had been a long time on her voyage, and run short of provisions, put in here for supplies, and they could not furnish them anything but rice and cassada, and not much of that. As to government affairs, I will not venture anything at present, only the fact, that they are not able to govern themselves. The rainy season is awful; it commences in May, and ends in this month; it rained without ceasing, for three weeks so

hard, that we could not see outside of the house; and, for the last four months, we have not had ten dry days. I thought I had seen it rain in the States, but find I was mistaken. This is the last letter you will get from me, as I expect, by the first of July, to strike glad hands with you, in Huntingdon.

Respectfully Yours,

CURTIS G. CARR.

To Levi Chaplin, Huntingdon, Pa.

MARSHALL, Nov. 28th, 1854.

Dear Sir:—The receipt of your letter, gave me more pleasure than anything else, since I have been in this country. My health is at present, very good; but, it would astonish you to see the food we live on; flour and meat are entirely out of the the question—the last flour that was brought here, sold for fifteen cents per pound; meat, thirty-one cents per pound; so that the only food we can get here, is rice and cassada, and that is very hard living. As to the government, the people pretend to elect the President and Congress; all the rest are appointed by the President. There are some few men here, who seem to have some intelligence, but they are scarce. I took part in an

election for representative, and neither the judges nor inspectors could read. As to agriculture, I have not seen anything like an excuse for farming. There is not one man in this country who has five acres of land cleared and in cultivation—the only implement is the hoe, and they manage to raise a little rice.—This place is made up of the wrong material, to ever make a prosperous country. They are mostly emancipated slaves, and when their six months is out, and they are turned off the public, they are so free, that they do not make much exertion to get along, for want of a master; and mostly become worthless vagabonds, and make their living by intrigue, robbing the natives of their little produce. Two-thirds of the emigrants have gone back, and are no better than the natives, and seem satisfied with rice and palm oil. The natives here are a well-formed people—dark complexion—and those in the bush, go entirely naked. Some of those in the American settlements, wear a little breech-cloth, made out of one yard of calico; they feed on all kinds of vermin and reptiles, and are very lazy; the men merely cut down the bush, and burn it—the women do all the other labor. The wages for a labor-

ing man here, when he can get anything to do, is twenty-five cents a day; and work is very scarce at that. The houses here are generally huts, built of bamboo, about ten by twelve feet, covered with leaves. There are, however, a few small brick and frame houses, occupied by the nobles of the land. Respecting the seasons here, we have six months that are miserably hot and dry, seldom raining at all; and then six months rain, that scarcely ceases during that time. Of wild animals, and poisonous reptiles, and tormenting insects, we have almost any variety and number. But I will close, saying, that taken altogether, this is the worst place any poor man could come to. If a man has money, he can make out to live, but if he is poor, he must die, and be put up in a mat, and thrown in the ground. That is the way they put away the poor.

Respectfully, &c.

JOSEPH P. BROOKS.

To Mr. Levi Chaplin.

MARSHALL, Jan. 7th, 1855.

My Dear Cousin:—I take this opportunity of writing a few lines, to let you know that we are all well at present, and hope that these

few lines may find you in the same state of health. Times are very hard here; we have not seen flour for three months, nor meat—nothing but rice, and very little of that. We have to work hard, to do anything like a business at the mill. Things do not work well; I think Mr. Nesbit gave you a very fair account of Liberia—I tell you, it is hard times. Mother, and all of us, but father, want to go back to the States. Chickens are selling at twenty-five cents a piece; eggs, thirty-seven and a half cents per dozen; rice, two dollars per bushel. When Mr. Nesbit writes his pamphlet, I wish you would please send me one; I would like to see what he says about this country. Emigrants to this country never get over the fever; those that have been here twenty years, still have the fever; the children of colonists born here, are not healthy. I never came as near being starved, as I have since we have been here; we can get nothing but dry rice and cassada. If you were here one day, you would be satisfied to return again to the States, as soon as possible. The city of Monrovia has not one pavement in it; the streets are grown up with weeds, leaving nothing but a narrow path to walk in, and it is

dangerous to go out at night, for fear of snakes. They have one vessel of war here, the schooner Lark, six guns; Commodore Cooper, is the commander, and when any one commits any crime, he is tied up at the whipping-post, and whipped; and they imprison him on the Lark, and repeat the dose of whipping every day, till the term of his imprisonment is out. They once met a slaver, and hailed him to stop; he accordingly laid to, and told Capt. Cooper, if he came near, he would present him with a cannon ball. Capt. Cooper made all haste back to Monrovia, to ask the President if he should fight. That is a sample of their spunk. * * * * Tell grandmother that we are all very glad that she did not come out with us, as we did not want her to suffer with us. No more at present; but remain,

Sincerely, your Cousin,

JAMES H. DEPUTIE.

To Hannibal Molson.

MARSHALL, Liberia, }
 Nov. 29th, 1854. }

MRS. MARY ANN SCOTT:—

Dear Madam—I embrace this opportunity to write to you, sincerely hoping that these lines may find you, and all your family, enjoying good health. I am as well as people get the first five years they are here, but I have not one-half the strength that I had in the States. I landed here on the 19th of December, 1853, and did not get the fever till the 7th March, following. I was not able to work any until the 1st of May; I then worked at carpentering for the Enterprise Company. We then got the saw-mill in operation, and they gave me a situation as sawyer, at \$19 per month, in which situation I have continued ever since. We cannot get any meat or bread here, at any price. There has not been any flour in Liberia, for at least two months, and the only chance we have of getting a taste of meat, is once in a while, when the natives bring in a deer from the bush. We have to live on rice alone, nearly all the time, and you may know that that goes hard with me. I hope that the Liberia fever has got out of Mr. Scott, and that he will forever renounce the notion of

coming here. If he had come here, he would certainly have died. When he saw the suffering into which he had brought his family, he would certainly have grieved, and grief coupled with fever, inevitably produces death. Tell all the people you see, not to come to torment, before they die, for when they come here, they are coming to torment. More than half that come here, die in a short time, and all that escape immediate death, suffer unspeakable misery, all their lives. I live in a little town called Marshall, forty miles from Monrovia. We are surrounded with wild beasts of numerous kinds; elephants, from four to twelve feet high; tiger-cats, wild dogs, deers, porcupines, monkeys, baboons and snakes, from four to forty feet in length. The people are very willing to eat any of these animals and reptiles, because they cannot get anything else. If it was not for the little rice raised by the natives, the people would certainly starve.—Many a time when I am setting down to such stuff as we can get here, I think of the good meals of victuals I have eaten in your house. The paths are about eighteen inches wide, grown up on both sides with bush, and we walk one before the other, tandem fashion,

afraid to set down our feet, on account of the snakes.

If you have a suit before a Justice of the Peace, and can show two dollars, before the other man, you will be sure of gaining the suit. I can make the best man in the Colony, perjure himself, for five bushels of rice. There are not two christians, or honest men, in all Liberia. Some of the constables cannot read their names in print, and it is hard work for some of the lawyers to write their names. They are the meanest people that ever breathed. Samuel Williams and D. Kelly, are quite sick; old Charles Deputie, is lying at the point of death. If they were at home, they would all stay there. There is the most rueful state of things existing here, that ever mankind heard of. I really hope to get back to the States, by May or June next. I will close with a disconsolate heart.

Your Friend,

EDMUND BROWN.

MARSHALL, Liberia, }
 Dec. 6th, 1854. }

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I take my pen in hand to drop you these lines to inform you that we are yet alive; but, alas! none but God, and he alone, knows what we have suffered since we have been here. We have not only suffered sickness, but we have suffered for provisions. Since we have been off the public, we have had little to eat but rice and cassada—not one mouthful of bread have we had for three months; a little coffee now and then—sometimes a little tea and sugar—is all we can get; so you may judge that times are hard with us. The saw-mill is all our dependence, and I do not believe they will succeed with it. They do not get to work till nine or ten o'clock, for the want of steam; they can't get the wood to burn well. I wish you could see how they work, and see if it is like the saw-mills in the States. But, O Lord, I do not want you or any body else to come to this place of torment. Oh, my friend, I can't describe my feelings when I hear my children, every day that they are able to eat anything, crying for bread, and there is none to give them. Deputie's health is very bad; and I don't know how he can ex-

pect to be well, or do well, after deceiving his family so. I did not think he would have treated me so. O, if I had never come here.

We are now living at Marshall, a little town about 60 miles from Monrovia. We moved on the first of October. Deputie tells people that the reason we moved so soon was that the insects were so bad there that we could not stay; and it is true, if insects they can be called. We saw a snake in our cupboard four feet long, one under our bureau six feet long, and one night one got in my bed; I can't tell how long it was; by the time I got a light, it was gone. I never saw such rats as were in that place—some almost as large as cats; they bit me several times in bed, and eat the bed-clothes upon the beds in which we were sleeping. You, nor any other person but those who have been here, ever saw such lizards, drivers, roaches, bugs, ants, &c. &c. I can't call half of the names of the destroyers that infest the houses here. All our family have very bad health—all sick nearly every day. I don't know when I will be able to get home, but I hope to come before long. Pray for me, that the Lord may so prosper me as to bring me once more to my native land.

MARY ANN DEPUTIE.

[*Extract of a letter from JOHN H. HARRIS, dated Monrovia, Nov. 10th, 1854, in reply to a letter from me. He says :*]

The reading of your letter, and the definition you gave of Liberian miseries, created no little comment; and from some of the interested, some anathemas for your future state. The company, however, are more incensed against you for deceiving, relative to your coming back. Some say that you could have secured your passage without subterfuge; but for my part, I conceive more truth than poetry in what you have said; but as I am in Rome, without any hope of getting out for at least one year, I must sing mum, and not rail out against things as I find them here. But I do say this: that no person has any business to come here, unless they have sufficient means, so as to leave it if they do not like it, or they may have a wailing equal to that of Rachael for her children, and with about as much hope of being comforted. All must suffer here, even those that are well prepared; and the poor, the mass of the emigrants, find it a harder road to travel than Jordan's cold stream; for, after being here six months, the time that the Colonization Society keeps you, you find yourself just one hundred per cent.

worse off than you were the day you landed. This cannot be explained so well by letter, as experience proves it to any one who wishes to try it. I do not say this to deter any one from coming; for that there is money to be made here, is an undeniable fact, but that is the only aspect in which I consider this country at all bearable. And I would not interfere with the right of every one seeing it themselves, and drawing their own conclusions.

JOHN H. HARRIS.

[*The following is an extract from a letter, written by MR. J. H. H. one of the party who went out to Liberia with the Pennsylvania Company, dated March 30th, '55, sent to a friend of his in Greensburg:*]

“You asked me whether it were true what a certain correspondent had written in regard to Liberia as it is. Well, there is more truth in it than many of the old settlers would like to admit. And I must confess, moreover, that its modifications are more bland than I could couch for publication. But one should not make expositions of their country that are detrimental to her interests. This comes under the head of “*truth must not be told at all times;*” but with candor I always endeavor to address my friends. I have seen barbarous

cruelties inflicted upon the aborigines by the Americans; whether the crime justifies the act, I am not able to say; but there is the same relation existing with many, as there is in the South between master and slave, with as much seeming authority; but it is not so with all; for I have seen acts of humanity here amongst the African-Americans, that would put the Anglo-Saxons of the United States to the blush, with all their wealth and intelligence. The food of the natives in the American families, is principally rice, palm oil and cassada, and they are satisfied if they get that. With many, meat is a rarity; and their dress, in many of the families, is a breech-clout that barely covers their secret parts. This is revolting to society. The authorities have enacted laws requiring American families to clothe the natives living with them; but as it is never enforced, it becomes optional. There is also a species of servitude among the traders that savors strongly of slavery. An interior head man, or petty king, will come to them for trade; he may have some three or four boys with him, that he has either stolen on the path, (for there are no roads,) or else captured in war; these he leaves

as security with them for the return of produce for the goods; the probability is he will never come back; therefore, they become theirs, to work, feed and clothe, as they see proper. This the law does not recognize as valid, yet it is tolerated, and hard is sometimes their lot; and with many of the colonists here, they think they are naturally and morally superior; as superior to the native as the master thinks he is to his slave in the States. There is also another feeling existing here which is dangerous in its nature, and detrimental to the prosperity of the country, and that is the prejudice existing, politically, (*and socially with some,*) between the old settlers and new-comers. I am unable to say what was the first cause of it. It is said that a certain clique of the old-comers, who have always been in power, are afraid, by the late influx, of the power being wrested from them, and their emoluments, if any, will be curtailed; therefore, they tried to enact laws disfranchizing the new-comers for two years, but did not succeed. This feud has made two parties in politics; but some of the old administrationists have declared that if the new party do gain the election in the coming contest for

President, they will contest the right to the chair, even at the point of sword and bayonet. The voice of the people was overruled in one of the Leeward settlements for a Mayor lately; but the new-comers becoming greatly indignant at the result, rose *en masse*, and swore by their Halidom to have justice, and they got it by reinstating the rightful one. So, you perceive there are other things besides the country itself to contend with in coming here; and naught but money and a determined will can conquer; that is, providing the fever lets you live. But I am wearying your patience. Times have been very dull with us for some time; we have had no goods from the States for some six months, and our mill meeting with several accidents, has delayed us much, so that our money matters have been, and are, in as critical a crisis as some merchants in the United States. We have all been more or less sick."

[*Previously writing from Monrovia to his wife, under date of March 6th, 1854, the same gentleman makes the following statements.*]

"You are aware, that what little means I had left from illness, had been invested in our

company, and as dividends are only declared yearly, I am left at present, in an almost penniless condition; but even the means of my going or sending for you, might be easily obviated, were there not other matters for us to reflect upon, and which requires greater consideration; and that is, our coming to a new country that is solely dependant upon foreign countries, for almost every article of sustenance, and where there is not one single article of house-keeping affairs manufactured; therefore, everything that we would need, I should have to get from the States; even the most trifling articles in the States, are a big item here, and to come here without every necessary thing, is to step into want and misery, which can only be realized, by seeing some poor souls here in that predicament. And, Love, however hard it may seem, or the separation be, yet, I must honestly confess, that I am not able to get the necessary wants now, for our mutual comfort; for it is madness, as would be like the actings of a simpleton, to come here without them. Therefore, dearest, for our own future comfort and happiness, do humbly submit to our separation a few months longer, when, I trust to be able to come myself, for

you. These are painful reflections, but it is better to put up with a few sacrifices now, than that our whole future bliss should be empoisoned by our indiscreetness. Besides, I have not yet undergone the fever, and there is no telling what may be its results, for they say it is not very merciful, when it is so long taking hold. This letter is painful to me to write; therefore, I cannot write more now. I promised to give your father an account of the affairs of the country, but I do not feel much able now, besides, he can receive from Mr. Nesbit, a more satisfactory account than I can write."

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NOTE.

Gratified at my good fortune in making my escape from Liberia, I resumed my former business, willing to forgive the Colonization Society for the deep wrong done me, in robbing me of my means; for, by the confidence which I placed in their base falsehoods, I was induced to emigrate there, and thus lost the fruits of my industry and economy; willing to forgive their stool-pigeons (colored men) who decoyed me there, and being averse to controversy, probably never would have appeared before the public with these pages, had I not been assailed by a publication in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, of the 26th of February last, as a falsifier, simply because I did not suppress my opinions; but, in my limited sphere, when asked, I verbally related the true condition of Liberia. The editors of the paper *refused* to publish my reply; and I feel it a duty I owe to myself, and to suffering humanity, that I should lay these plain unvarnished truths before them, in the hope that the Colonization agents will apply their zeal, and the people contribute their money to more worthy objects. I will only say in reply to that article, that I plead guilty to the charge of having deceived the Liberians. It was necessary that I should do so, in order to procure a passport; and I leave it to any sane man, if he would not have done the same? Two-thirds of the balance of that article is bombast, got up to deceive the unwary. Talk of building a rail-road in Liberia! The idea is simply ridiculous!

WILLIAM NESBIT.

Hollidaysburg, Pa. June, 1855.